



## Europa farà da sé? Thoughts on the debt crisis in Italy



Author: Sébastien Richard

Italy's predicament has just highlighted a further type of crisis in the euro zone. Barely a month after its appointment, the Monti government seems to be trying to make the necessary structural reforms. The euro zone, for its part, has started revising its governance method so that it can rise to the challenges resulting from a lack of Italian credibility. This week's European Issue by Sébastien Richard analyses the Italian debt crisis, which has left the country in a weak economic position but less affected than it seems. The author insists on the political factor that has worsened budgetary slippage. Italy has indeed suffered a real problem affecting its credibility under Silvio Berlusconi's government. As Mario Monti takes office, Italy now seems determined to respond to the EU's and IMF's demands. Sébastien Richard ends with suggestions put forward by the EU to rise to the Italian debt crisis.

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### Front page! :

#### EPP Group Study Days



The EPP Group Study Days will take place on 7th/8th December in Marseilles on the theme of "Defending our citizens, our economies and our values. The answer is more Europe". The Chairman of the Robert Schuman Foundation, Jean-Dominique Giuliani will speak on 7th December at a round table "Helping the Arab Spring by strengthening trust". On the following day, Mr Giuliani will take part in a seminar organised by "European Democrat Students" (EDS) on the position of Europe in the world... [Read more](#)

## Foundation :

### Political Change in Croatia



The Kukiriku coalition led by the Social Democratic Party (SDP) whose leader is Zoran Milanovic, rallying the Istrian Democratic Assembly (IDS), the People's party-Liberal Democrats (HNS) and the Pensioners' Party (HSU) won the general elections in Croatia with 44.5% of the vote and 80 seats (+13 in comparison with the election on 25th November 2007). It came out ahead of the Democratic Union (HDZ) led by outgoing Prime Minister Jadranka Kosor which won 22.1% of the vote and 47 seats (-19). The Democratic Alliance of Slavonia and Baranja (HDSSB) won 6 seats like the Croatian Labour-Labour Party (HL-SR). The independent list led by Ivan Grubsic, won two seats. The Farmers' Party (HSS) won 1 seat, likewise the Right Party (HSP). Turnout totalled 56.55% (-3.1 points in comparison with 2007)... [Read more](#)

### The new party 'Positive Slovenia' wins the general elections



The general elections in Slovenia caused a surprise since the party, Positive Slovenia, led by Zoran Jankovic, won with 28.54% of the vote and 28 seats. The new party came out ahead of the Democratic Party, led by Janez Jansa, which won 26.25% of the vote and 26 seats (-2 in comparison with the election on 21st September 2008). The Social Democratic Party (SD) led by outgoing Prime Minister Borut Pahor followed with 10.5% of the vote and 10 seats (-19), the Citizens List-Gregor Virant, 8.42% and eight seats, the Democratic Pensioners' Party (DeSUS), 6.9% and six seats (-1), the People's Party (SLS) 6.9% and 6 seats (+1). New Slovenia-Christian People's Party (NSi-KLS) makes a come-back in parliament with 4.79% of the vote and four seats. However the National Party (SNS), Zares (Real Z), and the Liberal Democratic Party (LDS) have left Parliament. Turnout totalled 64.69% ie -1.59 points than in 2008... [Read more](#)

### Decline of Vladimir Putin's party in Russia



The ruling party, United Russia (ER), won the general elections on 4th December in Russia with 49.54% of the vote and 238 seats in the Duma, the lower chamber of Parliament (-77 in comparison with the previous election on 2nd December 2007). It came out ahead of the Communist Party (KPRF), led by Guenady Zyuganov which won 19.2% of the vote (92 seats, +35), Fair Russia (SR), led by Nikolay Levichev, 13.20% of the vote (64 seats +26) and the Liberal Democratic Party (LDPR), led by Vladimir Jirinovski, 11.40% of the vote (56 seats, +16). Turnout was slightly below that recorded in the last general elections on 2nd December 2007, totalling 60.2% ie -3.51 points... [Read more](#)

## Financial Crisis :

### Coordinated Action by the Main Central Banks



On 30th November the European Central Bank announced coordinated international action on the part of several major central banks in order to counter the crisis. Action by the central banks of Canada, UK, Japan, Switzerland, as well as the American Federal Reserve and the ECB, aims to increase available liquidities in order to prevent the financial system from suffocating. This agreement is valid until February 2013 and should also enable various central banks to help each other more easily. This action should also facilitate loans to households and investors and therefore support recovery... [Read more](#)

### Economy/Finance



On 30th November the 27 Economy and Finance ministers approved the EU's 2012 budget. It will total 129.088 billion euro, ie an increase of 1.86% in comparison with the 2011 budget. Ministers also provided their support to the appointment of Frenchman, Benoît Coeuré to the European Central Bank's Board of Directors, in replacement of Italian, Lorenzo Bini Smaghi, who has resigned. They also called on the institutions to

continue their work in terms of budgetary control. They adopted a decision to modify the terms of payment of aid to Ireland. Finally, they approved a Euro Plus Pact on the rapprochement of national fiscal policies. This report pinpoints four priorities: the prevention of harmful practices, the fight to counter tax evasion and fraud, the exchange of good practice and international cooperation... [Read more](#)

### Eurogroup



On 29th November during a Eurogroup meeting chaired by Jean-Claude Juncker, the 17 euro zone Finance Ministers released the 4th and 6th aid instalments to Ireland and Greece. Ministers also looked into the steps to take to limit contagion of the crisis in the euro zone. The Eurogroup approved two new levers for the European Financial Stability Facility and welcomed the European Commission's proposals for integrated financial and fiscal governance... [Read more](#)

### Austerity Measures in Cyprus



The Cypriot government and opposition agreed on 2nd December on austerity measures including tax increases and the freezing of civil servants' salaries, indicated the government's spokesperson Stefanos Stefanou, who said that the government intended to save 200 million additional euros by putting a ceiling on means tested family allowance and school scholarships, and by countering tax fraud. Salaries over 2,500 euros, both in the public and private sector or amongst independents, will be taxed more according to a progressive scale, whilst VAT will rise from 15% to 17%... [Read more](#)

### Spain/Unemployment



The Spanish Employment Minister published data on unemployment on 2nd December for the month of November. Over one month the increase in unemployment totalled 59,536 people ie a rise of 1.37%. The number of unemployed in Spain increased in November to a total of 4.420 million, a record since 1996... [Read more](#)

### France/Unemployment



On 1st December the French statistics institute (INSEE) published the unemployment rate for the third quarter that reaches 9.3% in mainland France ie 2.6 million people; and 9.7% of the working population according to ILO standards (International Labour Organisation). On 28th November the Employment and Healthcare Minister published unemployment figures for October, up by 1.2%, in comparison with the previous month and by 4.9% over one year. The number of unemployed without any work at all now lies at 2,814,900... [Read more](#)

### Adoption of a Draconian Austerity Plan



On 4th December the Italian government adopted an action plan to prevent Italy from being swept away by the crisis. The austerity plan totals 20 billion euros and includes measures to a total of 10 billion additional euros to finance the revival of growth and to support employment: postponement of the retirement age to 66 years in 2018 in the private sector and a 2 point increase in VAT as of September 2012. An increase in property tax and luxury goods is also planned. Moreover, after the adoption of this plan, the head of government Mario Monti announced that he was relinquishing his salary as President of the Council and as Economy Minister. The draft bill was presented to the Italian parliament on 5th December... [Read more](#)

### The Portuguese Parliament adopts the 2012 Budget

On 30th November the Portuguese Parliament finally adopted the 2012 budget. This is of draconian austerity with reforms that aim to bring the deficit, which totalled 9.8% of the GDP in 2010, down to 4.5% at the end of 2012. Austerity measures mainly affect civil servants and pensioners with the abolition of the 13th and 14th month of salary. In



the private sector the number of hours worked per day will increase by 30 minutes. VAT is also due to go up on various products, particularly on restaurants, where it will rise from 13% to 23%... [Read more](#)

## UK



On 29th November, during his autumn speech to Parliament, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, George Osborne, laid out the measures to protect the UK from world instability. These aim to revive the economy, notably with a £30 million investment in infrastructures; moreover thanks to a national loan guarantee, aid will be set up to a total of £21 billion to enable credit flow to SMEs, which do not have easy access to capital markets. In 2010 the government forecast a surplus of 0.3% of the GDP in 2015. they are now expecting a deficit of 1.6% on that date... [Read more](#)

## Commission :

### State Aid



On 1st December the European Commission gave details of, and extended the rules applicable to State aid provided to the financial sector during the crisis. These rules notably aim to guarantee State remuneration in exchange for their support by making banks responsible and individual: remuneration must be set according to the risk linked to the bank being helped, and not according to the risk affecting the sector or the country. The Commission announced that it intended to continue to accept all requests for aid that are addressed to it as quickly as possible, if they are line with the rules in force... [Read more](#)

### Investment in Research and Innovation



On 30th November last the European Commission presented the Horizon 2020 programme that is due to serve as a funding base for research and innovation projects covering the period 2014-2020. Enjoying resources of nearly 80 billion euros it will be used to support promising new technologies, as well as to aid European researchers. One of Horizon 2020's goals is to stimulate growth and employment by focusing on activities with high value added... [Read more](#)

### Measures for better airports



The European Commission presented a package of measures on 1st December designed to increase the capacities of European airports. Indeed, nearly 800 million passengers travel yearly through them, ie one third of the world's total. This figure has tripled in 20 years - likewise the need for adequate responses. The three main legislative measures concern time slots, stop-over assistance and noise... [Read more](#)

### Further progress for the navigation system Galileo



On 30th November the European Commission put forward a proposals to reform the funding and governance of the EU's two space programmes, Galileo and EGNOS. Over the period 2014-2020, the Commission is proposing to commit 7 billion euros to complete these programmes. It stresses the need to distribute quite clearly the responsibilities between the European Agency GNSS, that depends on the EU and the European Space Agency which is totally independent... [Read more](#)

### New Asylum Measures

On 2nd December the European Commission published a document in



which it insists on the need to step up solidarity between the 27 EU Member States in terms of asylum and the protection of people who need it. Four priorities were put forward. The European Asylum Support Bureau is due to play a greater, more effective role, for example by facilitating the dispatch of civil servants from various countries to areas that most need help. The Commission also hopes to increase the funds made available to Member States and to facilitate their use. The document proposes to set up a warning system to prevent faults in the national asylum systems and to help international protection beneficiaries to relocate in the European Union... [Read more](#)

## Parliament :

### 2012 Budget Approved



On 1st December the European Parliament approved the EU's budget for 2012 in line with the agreement of 18th November last. The overall budget for next year will total 129.1 billion euros (+1.86%) for payments and 147.2 billion euros (+3.8%) for commitments. The Chair of the Budgets Committee at the European Parliament, Alain Lamassoure (EPP, FR) who chaired the Parliament's Delegation at the Conciliation Committee declared "In times of crisis, we have managed to reduce costs, whilst maintaining growth and competitiveness... [Read more](#)

### Green Light to Croatia's Accession to the EU



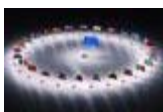
On 1st December MEPs approved Croatia's membership treaty to the EU, 564 votes in favour, 38 against and 32 abstentions. They did however call on the Croatian authorities to continue their work, notably with regard to the reform of the legal system and to fight against corruption and organised crime. The final signature of this treaty will take place on 9th December and membership will be effective on 1st July 2013, after the ratification of the treaty by Croatia and the 27 Member States. Croatia will thereby become the EU's 28th Member Country... [Read more](#)

### ECB Annual Report Adopted



On 1st December Mario Draghi presented the ECB's annual activity report explaining the monetary decisions taken in 2010 and 2011. He recalled the main objective was to counter inflation by both interest rates and unconventional methods and that budgetary imbalance in some States, as in some banks in the euro zone, were mostly responsible for the present crisis. Whilst congratulating the work achieved for better economic governance, he insisted on the need to define a more integrated budgetary policy. MEPs approved this report and welcomed the role played by the ECB in the fight against inflation, but also communicated their concern about the rise in interest rates slowing recovery, and called for greater fiscal coordination... [Read more](#)

### European Semester



MEPs adopted a report by Pervenche Beres (S&D, FR) on the European Semester, which plans for increased surveillance over national budgets by Brussels. In this report the MEP asks for the Parliament to be able to decide jointly with the Council of Ministers on the main orientations of the EU's economic policy adopted yearly by the 27. The report also advises on the enhancement of dialogue with the national parliaments and social partners... [Read more](#)

## Council :

### Defence and Diplomacy



The 27 Defence Ministers looked into on-going military operations on 30th November, to improve cooperation between the EU and other international organisations that have competences in terms of security and defence, notably the UN and NATO. Ministers asked permanent representatives to prepare a modification of the Athena mechanism



that is designed to fund operations. They set the European Defence Agency's budget at 30.5 million euros for 2012. The 27 Foreign Ministers condemned Iran with regard to its nuclear programme and for the attack on British diplomatic buildings. They froze Iran's assets and banned 143 Iranian organisations and 37 individuals from obtaining a visa. They also took new steps to sanction the Syrian regime. They met Nabil El Araby, Secretary General of the Arab League, to discuss joint answers to provide to the Arab Spring and to study that state of progress of the peace process between Israel and Palestine... [Read more](#)

#### Education, Youth, Culture and Sport



On 28th November the 27 Education, Youth, Culture and Sport Ministers adopted a resolution focusing on a new agenda for adult apprenticeships, as well as conclusions that aim to foster student mobility. They also approved four financial rules governing links with third countries in terms of education, development, and the promotion of democracy and Human Rights. They also stressed the importance of investing in education, training and competences, including those of a cultural nature, notably in times of crisis... [Read more](#)

#### Employment and Social Affairs



On 1st and 2nd December the 27 EU Employment and Social Affairs Ministers came to agreement on a common approach in view of a regulation on the coordination of social security systems. The amendments discussed notably concerned cross-border workers, who encounter the most difficulties because of differences in legislation. However, because a qualified majority was not reached, Ministers did not agree on the extension of the crisis derogation for the European Globalisation Adjustment Fund... [Read more](#)

#### Diplomacy :

##### EU-USA Summit



On 28th November, American President Barack Obama, received the Presidents of the European Council Herman Van Rompuy and the European Commission, José Manuel Barroso. The American President is concerned about the effects of the euro zone debt crisis on the American economy, and called for the EU to act with "strength and determination" to solve it. The EU said that it was expecting the USA to act to reduce its own budgetary deficit. The summit also focused on the Middle East. The heads of European and American diplomacy Catherine Ashton and Hillary Clinton, committed to making a joint declaration to act firmly with regard to Damas. They call for the immediate end of "violence". The USA and the EU said "they shared deep concern about activities associated with the possible military aspects of the Iranian nuclear programme," and insisted on their "determination to ensure that Iran accepted its obligations.".. [Read more](#)

##### Serbia/Kosovo



The Serb negotiator Borislav Stefanovic called on the Serbs living in the north of Kosovo to accept an agreement concluded between Belgrade and Pristina on the common management of crossing points which they received with disappointment. "It is high time to understand that this agreement is the best possible one given the circumstances, it is not about acknowledging Kosovo and it would be good for citizens in the north of Kosovo to be with their State (Serbia) at the moment", declared Mr Stefanovic during a press conference in Belgrade. "A major responsibility now weighs on the shoulders of the Serb leaders in the North of Kosovo, which should approach this problem rationally and wisely," said Mr Stefanovic. He said he hoped that Belgrade would reach a "unified" position with the Serbs of Kosovo on this issue... [Read more](#)

#### Germany :

Werner Hoyer appointed President of the European Investment Bank



On 30th November the European Finance Ministers came to agreement to appoint Werner Hoyer, the present German European Affairs Ministers, as President of the European Investment Bank (EIB). Werner Hoyer will succeed Belgian Philippe Maystadt who has chaired the EIB since 2000... [Read more](#)

### Angela Merkel promotes fiscal union to emerge from the crisis



On 2nd December German Chancellor Angela Merkel gave a speech to MPs in the Bundestag in explanation of her position, which she will defend at the European Council on 8th and 9th December. She insisted on the importance of reforming the European Monetary Union to transform it into a fiscal union to overcome the crisis. According to Ms Merkel Europe is starting "achieve fiscal union." "Rules have to be respected," she repeated. The Chancellor re-iterated her intention to modify the European treaties in order to include greater budgetary discipline. She explained that the introduction of joint "euro bonds" in all euro zone countries was not the right answer to the present crisis. In her opinion we might only consider this option after greater integration Europe wide has occurred... [Read more](#)

## Belgium :

### End of the political crisis in Belgium



After a political crisis that lasted over 500 days Belgium is due to have a new government within the next few hours. In the evening of 1st December the six Flemish and French speaking political parties agreed, under the guidance of Elio di Rupo, on the final government. The 185 page document was signed by the representatives of the PS, SP.A, Mr, Open VLD, CD&V and CDH, which will form the next government. The new government will then be presented to the king. Ministers will then be appointed and will be sworn in before the King... [Read more](#)

## Bulgaria :

### New Justice Minister



Bulgarian Prime Minister, Boyko Borissov, appointed Diana Kovatcheva, Director General of Transparency International in Bulgaria as Justice Minister on 30th November. She succeeds Margarita Popova, who was elected Vice-President of the new President of the Republic, Rossen Plevneliev on 30th October last... [Read more](#)

## France :

### Europe is a necessity



On 1st December French President Nicolas Sarkozy gave a speech on the effects of the crisis and the lessons that France and Europe should draw from it. In his opinion "Europe is a necessity but we have to rethink and reshape it" notably with a new treaty that includes "real euro zone government" with "greater discipline, more solidarity and more responsibility." With regard to the European organisations he said he supported an "intergovernmental" decision making process and "more decisions being taken by the qualified majority". As for the ECB Mr Sarkozy said he attached great importance to it independence and is "convinced" that the ECB will "act" to counter the debt crisis. He also hopes for a review of the Schengen agreement on the free movement of people within Europe... [Read more](#)

### Schengen, Criminality and Asylum



On 1st December the G6 Interior Ministers (France, Germany, Spain, Italy, Poland and the UK) addressed the following issues: Schengen agreements, asylum and criminality. They deemed "closer political steering on decisions regarding Schengen" was necessary; they "hope" to maintain the opportunity of "re-introducing internal border controls for reasons of public order". On asylum ministers agreed that "the goal

of a common regime in 2012 will be confirmed and that the completion of work will be done under the Danish presidency," ie in the first half of the year". With regard to the fight to counter crime "notably from countries in Central and Eastern Europe" they supported "better implementation of existing measures Europe wide, such as Europol and Eurojust..." [Read more](#)

## Italy :

### Mario Monti puts the final touches to his government



On 28th November the President of the Italian Council Mario Monti put the final touches to his government by appointing another minister: Filippo Patroni Griffi, as Civil Service Minister as well as 28 Deputy Ministers and Secretaries of State. The cabinet now comprises 18 ministers, 3 deputy ministers and 25 Secretaries of State... [Read more](#)

## Lithuania :

### Moldova



The resumption of negotiations between Moldova and the separatist republic of Transnistria that were suspended five years ago have helped both sides move towards an agreement, said the Lithuanian presidency of the OSCE in Vilnius. "Discussions over principles and procedures regarding the negotiations that took place in a constructive atmosphere comprise a trampoline for real progress towards a settlement in Transnistria" said the Lithuanian Foreign Minister Audronius Azubalis in a press release. "It is now vital to maintain this dynamic and continue to have official meetings to move forwards towards total settlement of the conflict - the goal we are all hoping for," he added. The negotiators promised to meet again in February 2012... [Read more](#)

## Poland :

### Revision of the Treaties



On 1st December Poland, which is chairing the Council of the European Union until the end of the year, said via its Prime Minister Donald Tusk that it wanted rapid change to be made to the European Lisbon Treaty to overcome the euro zone crisis. "We ask for a rapid change to the European Treaty without long, sterile debate," he declared. Poland prefers "a modification to the treaty in one go, rather than changing various international agreements within the euro zone," he added. Polish Prime Minister spoke in favour of stepping up the ECB's and Commission's role, which should be included in the modified European Treaty. "The present crisis proves that Europe needs a real central bank, and that the ECB's activities and the euro zone cannot be limited to simple emergency measures..." [Read more](#)

### GDP Growth



Poland's GDP growth continued rising by 1% in the third quarter in comparison with the previous period, according to seasonally adjusted variations - and by 4.2% in comparison with the third quarter of 2010, according to a first official estimate published on 30th November... [Read more](#)

## Russia :

### Electoral Fraud in Russia



According to a report published on 5th December, the OSCE observed a great number of infringements of the electoral law including "ballot box stuffing" during the general elections in Russia on 4th December... [Read more](#)

## UN :



## According to the ICJ Greece is not fulfilling its obligations



The International Court of Justice delivered a decision on 5th December with regard the implementation of the 1995 agreement that aimed to normalise relations between Greece and Macedonia (FYROM). According to the Court "the Hellenic Republic, in its opposition to allowing the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to enter NATO, is failing to fulfill the obligation that is imposed by the intermediary agreement of 13th September 1995." Greece is opposing FYROM's entry into NATO because of the disagreement they have over the country's name. Greece is against it being called Macedonia. The dispute has been ongoing since Macedonia declared its independence in 1991. The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia has been an EU candidate country since 2005... [Read more](#)

## Eurostat :

### Inflation at 3%



According to figures published by Eurostat on 30th November the annual euro zone inflation rate lay at 3% in November 2011. In October the rate was also 3%... [Read more](#)

### Unemployment totals 10.3% in the euro zone and 9.8% in the EU



According to a Eurostat estimate published on 30th November the unemployment rate in the EU and in the euro zone increased by 0.1 point between September and October and by 0.2 points in comparison with October 2010, reaching 9.8% and 10.3% respectively. This represents more than 23 million unemployed in the 27 Member States including 16 million in the 17 euro zone countries. Spain, 22.8% and Greece 18.3% are the most affected countries... [Read more](#)

## Eurobarometer :

### Europeans worried about the end of the crisis



A Eurobarometer survey reveals that more than one third (35%) of working European citizens are concerned about losing their job. This share has increased slightly since 2009 (+2 points). 71% of Europeans say they are pessimistic about the economic crisis ending soon and 87% believe that poverty has increased (in comparison with 2009). In spite of this unsettled climate Europeans believe the influence of the EU on social and employment policy in their country to be beneficial. 52% believe the employment policy positive and 51% believe the same about social policy. The European employment market is approved by 70% of those interviewed; 67% believe the measures adopted for access to education and training are positive; 59% appreciate the measures taken to facilitate the launch of companies and 58% approve those relative to working standards... [Read more](#)

## Studies/Reports :

### Corruption



Transparency International published a report entitled "2011- a Governance Crisis" on 1st December. In this report the authors note the degree of corruption in 183 countries. Italy, with a score of 3.9 out of ten and Greece with 3.4 come 69th and 80th in the ranking, whilst France and Germany are placed in 25th and 14th. The economic and financial crisis, which is hitting the euro zone, is largely due to "the inability on the part of public authorities to counter corruption and tax evasion," say the authors... [Read more](#)

### Wind Energy



The European Wind Energy Agency (EWEA) presented its new report on wind energy entitled "Wind in our Sails. The coming of Europe's offshore wind energy industry." The authors are forecasting major growth in the production of offshore wind energy until 2030. Growth will rise to 562 TWh per year which will correspond to 14% of Europe's

electricity requirements in 2030... [Read more](#)

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## Culture :

### Casanova: the passion for freedom



The National Library of France acquired a marvellous manuscript in February 2010, which was written in French: "L'Histoire de ma vie" by Giacomo Casanova (born in Venice in 1725, died in Dux, Bohemia in 1798). To celebrate this event the library is devoting a major exhibition to this amazing personality and writer until 19th February 2012. The exhibition which is called "Casanova, the passion for freedom" is made of ten books based on the manuscript "L'Histoire de ma vie" and takes the visitor on a journey covering 250 pieces of work (prints, paintings, sculptures ...) in the footsteps of this extraordinary explorer of pleasure... [Read more](#)

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### International Human Rights Film Festival



In its fourth year, the International Human Rights Film Festival is offering a programme of more than 80 films up to 12th December, including a great number of French productions and co-productions which will be screened in four cinemas in Vienna. Debates and conferences will take place focusing on the central theme of Human Rights... [Read more](#)

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### Bernardo Bellotto



The Sarcinelli Palace at Conigliano is hosting an exhibition of some of the most beautiful works of Bellotto, Canaletto, Carlevarijs and Marieschi until 15th April 2012. The exhibition presents the high point of Italian painting in the 18th century typified by colourful landscape paintings. The paintings on show take visitor on a trip through Europe - visitors have a spectacular view of a few towns, with each offering an exceptional architectural wonder, crystal clear light and a palette of very bright colours... [Read more](#)

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### European Cinema Award



The prize for the best European film 2011 was awarded on 3rd December to "Melancholia" by Dane, Lars von Trier. The prize was given by the European Cinema Academy in Berlin... [Read more](#)

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## Agenda :



5th December  
Brussels  
Competitiveness and General Affairs Council

Bonn  
International Conference on Afghanistan



8th December  
Frankfurt am Main  
ECB Governors' Council



8th-9th December  
Brussels  
European Council



12th-15th December  
Strasbourg

12  
Dec

Plenary Session - European Parliament

15  
Dec

15th-16th December  
Brussels  
Agriculture and Fisheries Council

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